

STEPS in choosing child care

1. List the things that are important for you and your child.
2. Collect names of potential child care providers.
3. Call several caregivers and ask about:
 - Space for your child.
 - Hours of operation, vacation coverage.
 - Fees and any subsidies.
 - Location, transportation.
 - Meals and snacks.
 - Ability to meet your child's individual needs.
 - Other things that are important to you.
4. Make appointments to visit three or more sites. It's important to check them out in person.
5. Be sure to ask all of your questions during the visits and use the checklist in the DSHS publication "Choosing Child Care: A Consumer Guide for Parents," DSHS 22-516(X) to evaluate sites.
6. Check caregiver references by:
 - Talking to parents with children in the program.
 - To check on the complaint and violations history of a provider, call toll free 1-866-482-4325 (1-866-48CHECK).
7. Take your child to visit the final choice(s). If possible, let your child help make the final decision.
8. Trust your intuition and your observations. No setting is perfect, and you'll need to figure out which compromises you're willing to make.
9. Read the caregiver's written policies and procedures carefully. Be sure to sign a contract or agreement form with the caregiver, and make your mutual expectations clear, including the fee structure, holidays, vacations and refunds.
10. Make a back-up plan for emergencies.



From the pamphlet,
Choosing Child Care, A Consumer Guide for Parents
DSHS 22-516(X)

Call **1-800-446-1114** for your copy.

Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services
DSHS 22-859(X) (Rev. 12/04)

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
Division of Child Care and Early Learning
PO Box 45480
Olympia, WA 98504-5480

QUICK Reference Guide

Child Care Subsidies & Early Childhood Education Options in Washington State



Washington State Department
of Social and Health Services

DSHS 22-859(X) (Rev. 12/04)

Child Care Subsidies & Early Childhood Education Options in Washington State

QUICK Reference Guide

| Program | | Who Is Eligible | | Program Description | | Where to Apply | |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) Agencies | | No eligibility criteria; anyone who calls this telephone service will be served. (Some counties charge a modest fee to families above a certain income level.) | | Helps parents find quality, affordable, licensed child care, links parents with available subsidy program information, facilitates the licensing process for child care providers, and generates public awareness of child care issues. | | For the Resource and Referral nearest you, call Washington State Resource and Referral Network at 1-800-446-1114 or http://www.childcarenet.org | |
| Working Connections Child Care | | *Employed, low income families. *Families eligible for WorkFirst (TANF), enrolled in approved job search, training, or work. *Parents under age 22, not on TANF, enrolled in high school or a GED program. | | Child care subsidies are available to eligible families who need child care to maintain their employment or participate in an approved training plan. | | Local DSHS Community Services Office, http://www.dshs.wa.gov | |
| Seasonal Child Care for Agricultural Workers | | Employed, low income agricultural workers. At least 50% of annual earned income must be from seasonal agricultural related work. | | Child care subsidies are available for eligible seasonally employed agricultural workers. Parents select a licensed or certified child care provider. | | Access is through local Seasonal Child Care Contractors. For information call the local Resource & Referral agency. | |
| Homeless Child Care | | Families who are homeless and are not receiving other subsidized child care programs. | | Child care subsidies are available while parents seek permanent housing, employment, or take care of personal business such as legal, medical or financial appointments. | | Access is through local contracted agencies. For information call the Child Care Resource & Referral agency. | |
| Child Protective Services Child Care | | Families currently served by Child Protective Services (CPS). | | Child care subsidies may be approved as part of the case plan for families receiving services through CPS. | | Access to child care is through the CPS social worker. | |
| Child Welfare Services Child Care | | Families currently served by Child Welfare Services (CWS). | | Child care subsidies may be approved as part of the case plan for families receiving services through CWS. | | Access to child care is through the CWS social worker. | |
| Employed Foster Parent Child Care | | For licensed foster parents who are employed. | | Child care subsidies to support the foster parent with their employment. May be approved as part of the case plan. | | Access to child care is through the social worker. | |
| Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) | | Individuals with disabilities who are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and require child care to participate in vocational rehabilitation services or employment. Certain conditions apply. | | Child care subsidies may assist individuals with disabilities to obtain and keep employment. DVR may pay child care under certain conditions to help eligible individuals prepare for and get a job. | | Local DVR office. For more information call 1-800-637-5627 or check the website at http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/dvr | |
| Crisis Nursery | | Families who are in crisis and in need of emergency child care for children ages 6 years and younger. | | Child care is available on a 24-hour basis. Parents can use the service for up to 72 hours. Program goals are to prevent child abuse and neglect. | | All parents are self-referred. For information, call 1-800-446-1114. | |
| Division of Alcohol & Substance Abuse (DASA) Child Care | | Parents attending an approved alcohol or drug treatment facility. | | Child care is provided while parents are attending state or county funded alcohol or drug treatment. | | Access to child care is through treatment facility staff. | |
| First Steps Child Care | | Pregnant women with Medicaid while attending Medicaid covered medical visits, provider ordered bed rest and NICU visits. | | Child care subsidies are available while parents attend outpatient medical visits; the time per visit is usually less than four hours. | | For local resources call Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies at 1-800-322-2588. | |
| Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) | | Families with three- and four-year-old children and their families with income up to 110% FPL or who are otherwise at risk of school failure. | | This program helps children in the public school system through comprehensive, integrated services including early childhood education, health and dental screenings, nutrition, parent involvement, and family support services. | | ECEAP contractors determine eligibility. For more information call OCD at (360) 725-2830 or e-mail ECEAP_Admin@cted.wa.gov | |
| Head Start | | Families with children birth-5 years with income up to 100% FPL. Serves eligible children 3 - 5 years of age. Early Head Start (EHS) serves eligible pregnant women, infants and toddlers up to age 3. | | Comprehensive child development program offering health, education, and family support. Parents also participate and benefit from the program. | | Contact local programs or call (360) 725-4686 to find the program nearest you. | |
| CPS | Child Protective Services | DCFS | Division of Children and Family Services | FPL | Federal Poverty Level | | |
| CSO | Community Service Office | DSHS | Department of Social and Health Services | NICU | Neonatal Intensive Care Unit | | |
| CWS | Child Welfare Services | DVR | Department of Vocation Rehabilitation | OCD | Office of Community Development | | |
| DASA | Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse | ECEAP | Early Childhood Education Assistance Program | R&R | Resource and Referral | | |
| DCCEL | Division of Child Care and Early Learning | EHS | Early Head Start | TANF | Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Start | | |